

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 16709 210751Z

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-06 INT-05 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 GSA-01

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5033

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 16709

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EEWT, JA, CU

SUBJECT: US POLICY ON JAPANESE PURCHASE OF CUBAN NICKEL

SUMMARY: EX-IM BANK PRESIDENT SUMITA, ON RETURN FROM CUBA, HAS TOLD PRESS JAPAN SHOULD BUY CUBAN NICKEL. SUMITA'S STATEMENT HAS PROMPTED FONOFF TO ASK FOR CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT OF US POLICY AS MIGHT AFFECT JAPANESE IMPORTATION OF CUBAN NICKEL. END SUMMARY.

1. UNDER PRESSURE FROM JAPANESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, FONOFF (2ND CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN DIVDIR HAYAKAWA) CALLED EMBOFF TO ASK FOR UPDATED POLICY READING ON JAPANESE IMPORTATION OF CUBAN NICKEL. REQUEST STEMMED FROM REMARKS MADE BY EX-IM BANK PRESIDENT SUMITA FOLLOWING OCTOBER VISIT TO CUBA WHERE HE HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH CUBAN FONMIN AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC COLLABORATION RODRIGUEZ. IN RESPONSE TO CALL BY RODRIGUEZ FOR IMPORTATION BY JAPAN OF CUBAN NICKEL, SUMITA TOLD JAPANESE PRESS THAT BECAUSE OF OAS ECONOMIC BLOCKAGE OF CUBA AND US ATTITUDE IN THE PAST, JAPAN COULD NOT BUY CUBAN BUT WITH
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 16709 210751Z

LIFTING OF TRADE EMBARGO BY OAS, THIS IS NO LONGER

NECESSARY, THEREBY ADVOCATING IMPORTATION BY JAPAN
OF CUBAN NICKEL.

2. HAYAKAWA SAID HE DISCUSSED MATTER IN HYPOTHETICAL
TERMS WITH CUBAN DESK OFFICER AND LEGAL BUREAU OFFICER
IN DEPARTMENT IN JUNE 1975. DEPARTMENT'S REACTION WAS
STRONGLY NEGATIVE. SINCE THEN, OAS EMBARGO OF CUBA HAS
BEEN LIFTED AND, SAYS HAYAKAWA, BOTH FRANCE AND ITALY
ARE IMPORTING CUBAN NICKEL. OUT OF REGARD FOR IMPORTANCE
OF US-JAPAN RELATIONS, HAYAKAWA WILL BE SYMPATHETIC
TO US DESIRES BUT HE NEEDS APPROPRIATE RATIONALE.

3. ALTHOUGH JAPANESE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO MAKE
QUERY IN WASHINGTON, HAYAKAWA ASKED THAT WE ALSO REQUEST
STATEMENT ON US POSITION. THUS, PLEASE ADVISE, TO PERMIT
PARALLEL RESPONSE IN TOKYO.
HODGSON

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